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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6775

INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES PRIORITY

RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY 0026

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0120

RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 0011

RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0045

RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY 0019

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 000391

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TAGS: PREL BM EAID EU PHUM PREF EI

SUBJECT: IRELAND MAINTAINS HARD LINE ON BURMA SANCTIONS

REF: A. SECSTATE 55919

1B. SECSTATE 57126

Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Mary E. Daly; Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

SUMMARY

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11. (C) Ireland supports the unconditional renewal of the EU's common position on Burma, said James McIntyre, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Deputy Director of the Asia and Oceania Political Division, to whom Emboff delivered reftel points on April 12. Additionally, he informed Emboff that Ireland did not participate in the 2006 Burma/Myanmar Forum and that the EC statements, including that of EC Director General for External Relations, Eneko Landaburu, were not representative of the EU. McIntyre stated that the GOI remains strongly committed to the continuation of sanctions and restrictions on Burma outlined in the EU common position. The GOI also stands by comments made to the Irish Parliament by Foreign Minister Dermot Ahern condemning the GOB's abuse of human rights and general lack of progress towards democracy. End Summary.

GOI SUPPORTS RENEWAL OF EU COMMON POSITION

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12. (C) McIntyre noted that among EU countries, Ireland is perceived as having one of the most hard-line positions on Burma, and as one of the countries that is most supportive of the roll-over of the EU common position, due to expire April 130. He anticipates that the common position will be renewed in its entirety, and he was not aware of any EU states softening their approach on Burma. Foreign Minister Ahern confirmed in an April 4 statement to Parliament that the GOI would continue to restrict diplomatic exchanges with Burma until the Burmese Government made significant progress in the roadmap towards democracy. McIntyre believes the GOI's position will be coordinated with the USG when Burma is discussed at the ILO in June and ECOSOC in July.

ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

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13. (C) According to McIntyre, there is an increased recognition among EU states of the roles played by ASEAN countries, China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea in catalyzing meaningful political, legislative, and humanitarian reforms in Burma. The GOI will encourage a unified approach on Burma among these countries through

continued bilateral contact with respective country representatives. Ireland, however, will not likely make a public statement on Burma prior to the April ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting.

SKEPTICAL OF PROGRESS THROUGH SECURITY COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

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14. (C) The GOI supports further UN Security Council engagement regarding Burma, said McIntyre. Ireland is concerned, however, that the UNSC may not be able to agree on mechanisms that would foster meaningful progress. Additionally, he stated that the GOI does not anticipate, nor is it likely to press, UNSYG Annan to name a new UN Special Envoy, considering the consistent unwillingness of the Burmese regime to participate in dialogue with former Special Envoy, Razali Ismail. Should a new Special Envoy be named, however, the GOI would be supportive of strengthening his/her mandate to pursue democratic reform.

BENTON